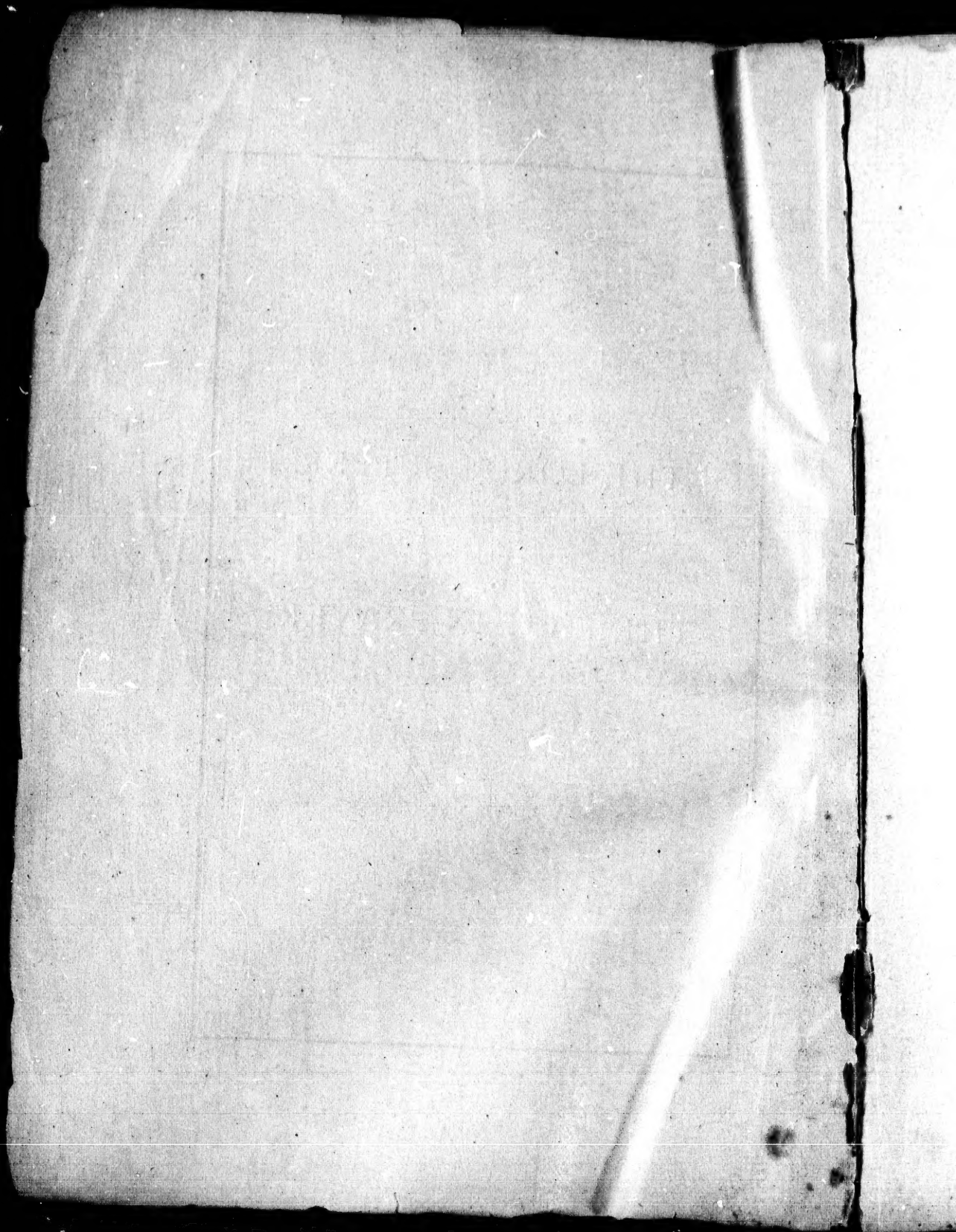


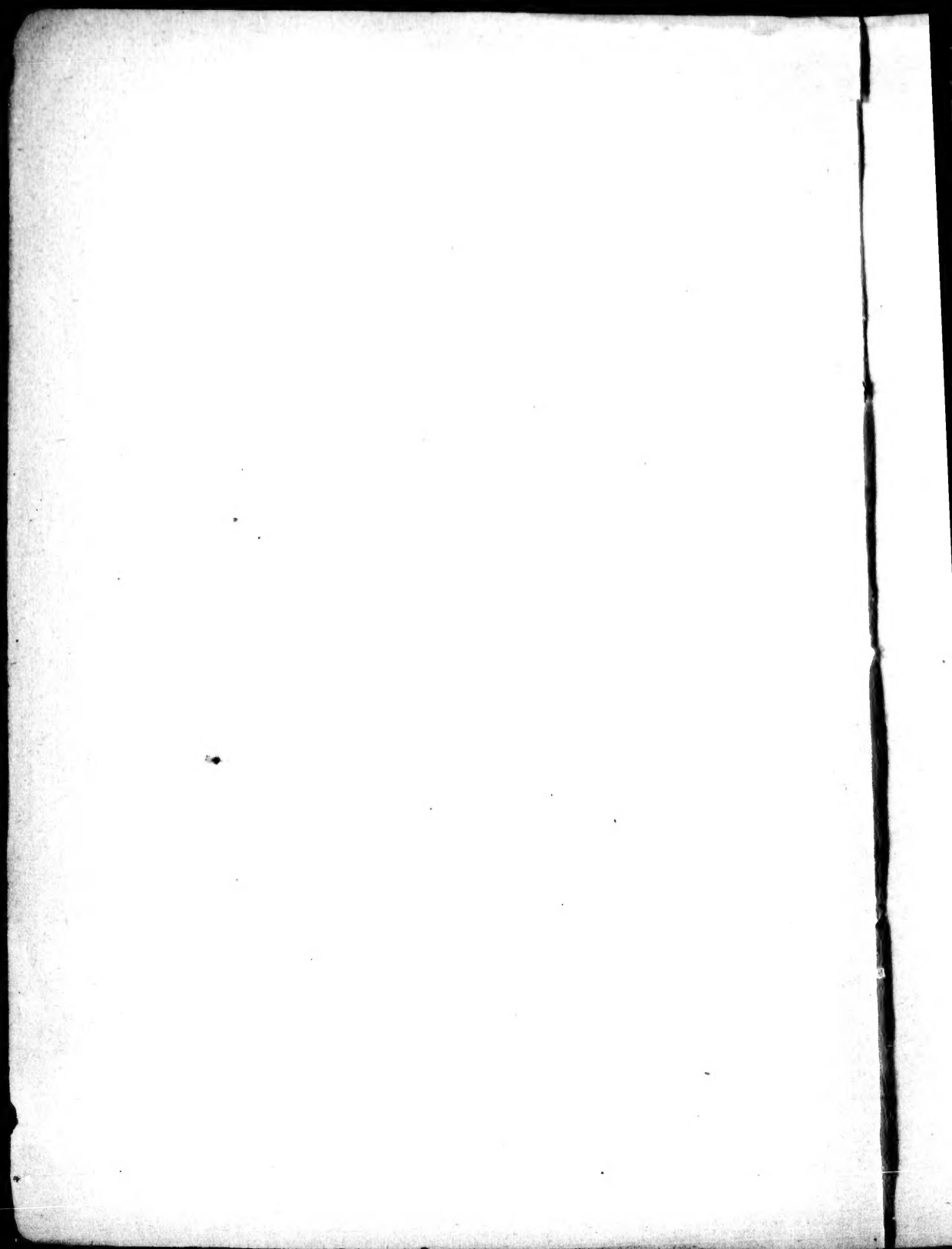
THE LORD'S SUPPER.

THE EAST IN PRAYER.

SECOND EDITION—ENLARGED.

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Permit me to say to those who have read the First Edition, that the only additions hereto are on pages 12, 19, 23, 27 and 33, to which I beg leave to draw their attention.

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THE LORD'S SUPPER.

THE EAST IN PRAYER.

(not a subtitle)

BY

B. HOMER DIXON.

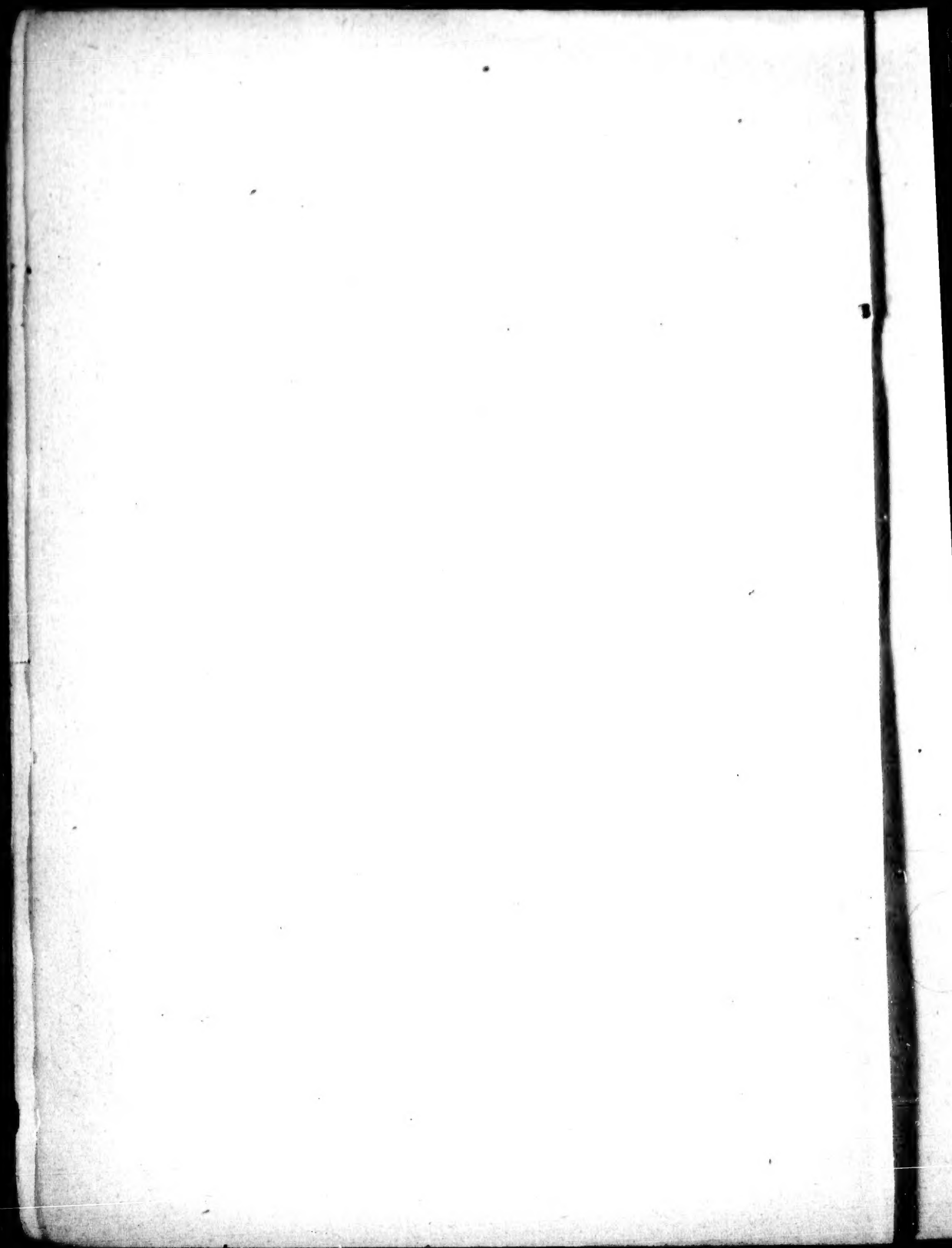
SECOND EDITION — ENLARGED.

"PROVE ALL THINGS ; HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD."

TORONTO :

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1870.



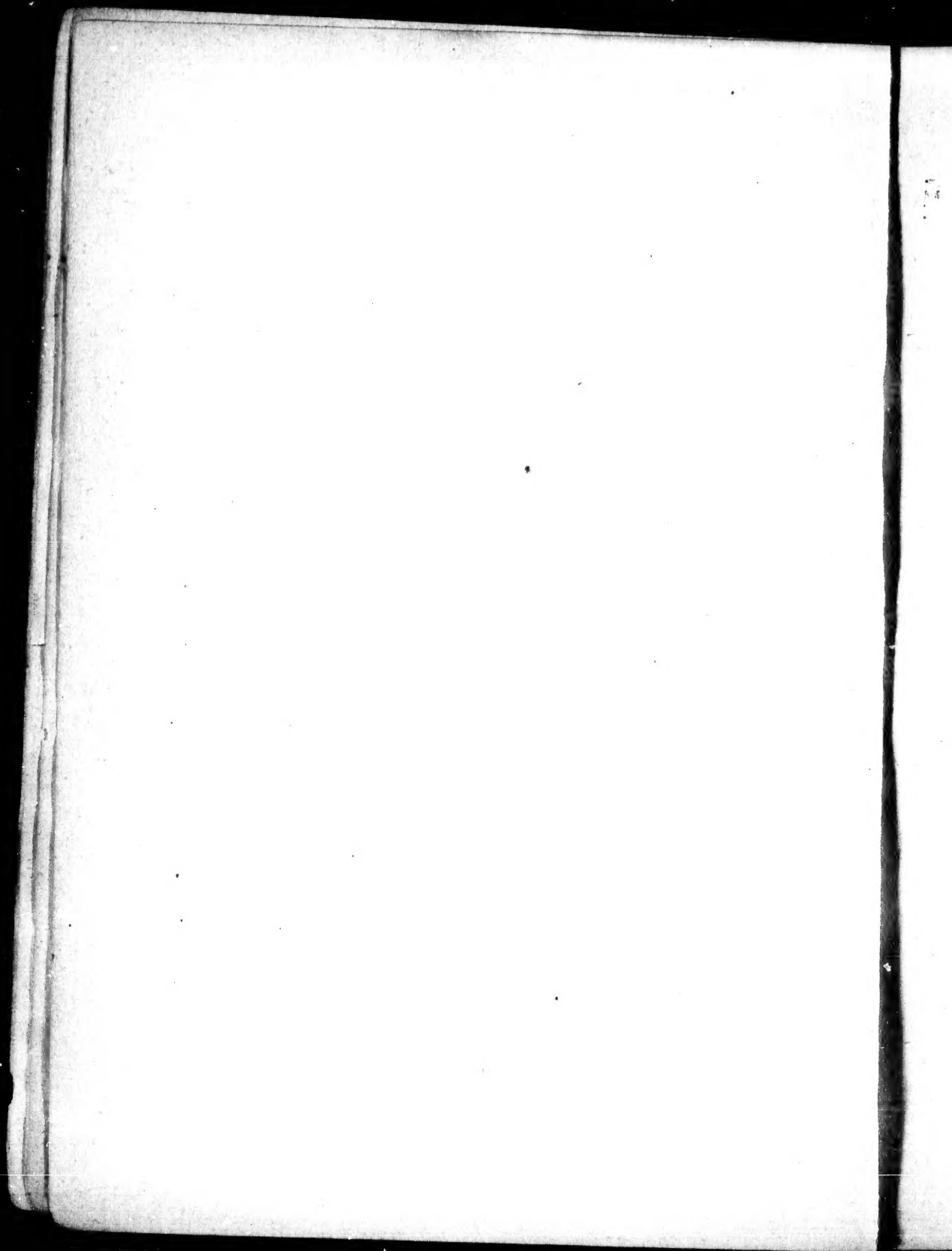
PREFACE TO THE FIRST (PUBLISHED) EDITION.

These two articles were lately printed for private distribution but are now published by request, and those who have read the first edition of the tractate on the Lord's Supper will find the case more clearly stated herein.

The proceeds hereof will be given to the Toronto Young Men's Christian Association.

I do this remembering the words of one, the mention of whose name is enough, the late Dr. Arnold, of Rugby, who a short period before his death, calling a friend to his bedside, said to him, "There was a time when I laughed at the idea of the Church of Rome regaining the ascendancy in this country. I am not of the same opinion now. I see the possibility of such an issue. My only hope is in the Evangelicals of the Church of England cordially uniting with Evangelical Dissenters. The true-hearted in the Church may be the heavy artillery in the cause of Protestant truth, and the Dissenters the light infantry; but though they may constitute different divisions under different generals, the strength of an army is in its unity. The Commander-in-Chief is one, the cause one, and the army ought to be one also."

The term "Dissenters" is disliked by those who do not conform to the Church of England, but none can reasonably complain at its use here, where nothing but kindness is intended and no offence meant. In Canada, however, there is no Established Church, and there are therefore no Dissenters.



THE LORD'S SUPPER.

"The Order of the Administration of the Lord's Supper, or Holy Communion," is the title of the special service in the Book of Common Prayer; and the Twenty-eighth Article is simply designated "Of the Lord's Supper." Nor was it without reason that the Fathers of the Church of England, at the Reformation, guarded with peculiar care everything pertaining to that Sacrament by which, in obedience to the commands of our divine Redeemer, the members of His Church, as often as they "eat this bread, and drink this cup, do shew the Lord's death till He come."

"Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on Him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving;" "Drink this in remembrance that Christ's Blood was shed for thee, and be thankful;" are the words appointed to be used by the Minister when he delivereth the bread and

the cup to the communicant ; while the Thirty-first Article ;—"Of the one Oblation of Christ finished upon the Cross ;" with its protest against "the Sacrifices of Masses," reminds us of the grievous corruptions and deadly errors which were done away with when the "Order of the Administration of the Lord's Supper," set forth in the Book of Common Prayer, restored that Sacrament to its scriptural simplicity and true significance.

It becomes us now to watch with jealous care, lest, inadvertently, we admit of any change calculated to revive the pernicious and deadly errors involved in the transformation of the Lord's Supper into the Sacrifice of the Mass. Nor, viewed in this light, is the name thus applied to it devoid of significance.

The French call it "*la cène*," from the Latin "*cœna*," supper. The Germans sometimes call it "*das Nachtmahl*," or the night-meal, but more generally "*das heilige Abendmahl*," *i. e.*, the holy evening-meal ; and such it really is, for Archbishop Wake says: "It is called the Lord's Supper because it was both instituted by our Lord at supper, and was designed to succeed into the place of the Paschal Supper of the Jews."

Romanists do not use the term "The Lord's Supper," because it destroys their notion of a sacrifice, and their use of private mass.

Although there is no direction at what time the Office of this Holy Communion shall be used, still, since the Reformation until within the last few years, it always, I believe, followed after Morning Prayer: and Bishop Sparrow says: "It may, perhaps, more fitly be called the *second service* than the Communion. And so it is often called, though not in the rubric of the liturgy, yet in divers fast-books and the like, set out by authority." And lest some should think it ought to be called the third service because it followed the Litany, the Bishop adds, that the Litany is not a service but "supplications," and looked upon sometimes, when other offices follow, as a kind of preparative to them, as to the Communion, Communion, &c. Wheatly also says: "There was some time between the ending of Morning Prayer and the Lord's Supper, and the Communion Service is called the Second Service."

Such being the case, why should the Supper be turned into a Breakfast or Early Communion? I

for one can find no sufficient authority for altering our Lord's institution.

Our blessed Lord Himself administered His Supper once only, in the evening, and not fasting, but after eating.

St. Paul administered it on a Sunday Evening about thirty years after our Lord's death.

The Disciples came together *to break bread*, and Paul, who was to depart on the morrow, preached so long and earnestly as to pay no regard to the hour, when the assembly was disturbed by a young man who, while sitting on the window sill, had sunk into sleep and fell out of the window and was taken up dead. Paul went down and embracing him, said, "Trouble not yourselves ; for his life is in him." They then returned to the upper chamber, *broke bread*, and eat, and continued talking until daybreak, when Paul departed.

This was a later celebration than usual, but it was Paul's "Farewell Sermon," and he was "long preaching," when the accident occurred. Immediately after which, however, he administered the Supper, and although past midnight, it was a late and not an early celebration, as the Jews began

their day at six a.m. of our reckoning, and their night at six p.m.

We know from the letter of Pliny, the younger, that about the year 112, the primitive Christians still celebrated the Lord's Supper, and their Agapæ or Feasts of Charity, in the evening; and in 140, as we are told by Justin Martyr, the Christians met together on Sundays for reading the Scriptures, a sermon and prayers, after which they celebrated the Lord's Supper.

Half a century later, as we learn from Tertullian (A.D. 192), they were sometimes obliged in times of persecution, to meet early in the morning, before day to celebrate the Eucharist in their religious assemblies—and then took it fasting—but, he adds, they also took it at other times.

Tertullian's time seems to be the era when the heresy of taking the Supper fasting, first arose. I say "heresy," not only because it is against our Lord's own teaching, but also because I do not think any one has the right to improve upon St. Paul; and his words to the Corinthians, about A.D. 57, are too plain to be misconceived.

"For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily,

eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. Wherefore my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another. *And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation.*"

Bingham states, that among the Apostolical Canons (A.D. 250) is the following: "If any of the faithful come to Church to hear the Scriptures read, and stay not to join in the prayers, and receive the Communion, let them be excommunicated;" and the Council of Antioch, which was held in the middle of the fourth century, repeats the decree.

The Council of Laodicea (A.D. 361) describes the whole in this order: "First, after the sermon the prayers of the catechumens, and then the prayers of the penitents, and, after their departure, the prayers of the faithful, and then the kiss of peace, and last of all the offering of the holy oblation."

The Council of Carthage (A.D. 397) had an express canon that it should be taken fasting, but neither this Council nor those of Antioch and Laodicea, although among the many recognized

by the Romish Church, are included in the six councils received and approved by the Catholic or Universal Church; and the so-called Apostolical Canons are now known to be forgeries.

In the Churches of Egypt and Thebais, according to Socrates (A.D. 439.) they were used on Saturdays to administer the Eucharist after eating in the evening, although the general custom was to take it fasting.

Mosheim says (writing of the third century): "The time of its administration was different, according to the state and circumstances of the Churches. Some deemed the morning, some the afternoon, and some the evening, to be the most suitable time for its celebration."

We all know how soon errors crept into the early Church; and does not all this tend to prove it. Why then should we not go direct to the Fountain Head—our Saviour's New Testament?

The Jews, it is true, almost exalt their Talmud above the Old Testament, but True (*i.e.* Protestant not Roman) Catholics may follow a different rule, and reject tradition when it does not agree with the Bible.

Ritualists may doubtless find a precedent for Early Communion in the mass, which (except, perhaps in extraordinary cases) can only be said from morning dawn till mid-day; for the Romish priest who says mass, must be fasting from the midnight before, "out of respect for the victim of which he is to partake."

The Protestant does not consider it necessary to take the Lord's Supper fasting. He believes that his God is a Spirit, and accordingly he eats the bread (representing the body) and drinks the wine (representing the blood) in commemoration only, and takes it spiritually into his inmost heart and soul. The Romanist, on the contrary, believes in a material idol made of flour and water, which he conceives is turned into flesh and blood by the act of consecration, and this wafer idol he devours, and while the Protestant takes his God to his heart, the Romanist takes his idol into his stomach. Whether it remains there, or no, as a thing of the earth, earthy, and incorporated into a corruptible body, it must see corruption.

But what did David say of Him whose death Protestants commemorate—"Thou wilt not suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption."

Is it not wonderful that the Ritualist, who is constantly looking out for symbols even in trifles, is so wilfully blind as not to see the symbols in the bread and wine? As the symbols of our divine Redeemer's broken body and shed blood, how beautiful are their sacramental significance and use to the Protestant Christian.

Is it too much to suppose that our blessed Lord foresaw the evil that would follow, and therefore set forth the time, when He instituted His Holy Sacrament so very clearly? St. Matthew says: "Now, when the even was come." They had probably had their breakfast and dinner, which preceded the supper—but even were that not the case, it is evident our Lord did not intend the Sacrament to be taken fasting, or He would have *commenced* by giving them the bread and wine; but the Apostle says: "And *as they were eating* Jesus took bread," and St. Mark uses almost the same words. Still more explicit is the language of the Apostle Paul, in his Epistle to the Corinthians: "I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus *the night* in which He was betrayed took bread;" and, "After the

same manner also the cup, *when He had supped* ; or as it is even, if possible, more explicitly rendered in the Communion Service : "Likewise *after supper* He took the cup."

The last time our Lord appeared to His disciples was at the Sea of Galilee. When they went on shore Jesus saith unto them, "Come and *breakfast*," for the Greek word rendered "dine" in the authorised version, although it sometimes signifies the noontide or meridian meal, generally signifies the first meal, breakfast, the meal taken before going to battle or to work, and such it was here, for they had been all night fishing near the land, and in the morning (perhaps at daybreak) they saw Him on the shore. "Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise," *but He did not break the bread and bless it !*

Was ever a more loving meeting than this when He said "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me ?"—And yet He did not give them His Supper ! And why ? Was it not because it was in the morning, —because it was at *Breakfast*—whereas the Supper of the True Paschal Lamb was to be eaten in the evening ?

I repeat then, it is not a breakfast, nor to be taken fasting; neither by having early Communion, should we give occasion to the ignorant to think so. It is the Lord's Supper, succeeding to the Paschal Supper of the Jews; and the early Christians appear to have understood it so, for the Lord's Supper and their Agapæ, or Feasts of Love, or Charity, were usually celebrated in connection, in the same manner, as the Jews combined the family meal with the Paschal Supper.

Neander says, "At the *close of the meal* the presider distributed bread and wine to the persons present, as a memorial of Christ's similar distribution to the disciples."

Of late years, early Communion has been introduced into some sound Churches, both High and Low, probably without due reflection; but I trust, for the future, Churchmen will no longer alter our Saviour's institution to please their own fancies.

The custom of taking the Supper after Morning Prayer may, perhaps, be considered sanctioned by long usage; and to many who, either from ill-health, or from dwelling at a distance, are unable

to attend divine service in the evening, it is the end or close of public worship for the day, and so, in a measure, approaches to the hour of its original institution.

The Jews had a former and a latter evening, the first of which began at noon, the second at sunset ; and the Passover was appointed to be slain between the two evenings, or about three o'clock in the afternoon, and this was the very time of the day when Christ the true Passover was sacrificed on the Cross.

After the building of the Temple, the lamb was killed from the ninth to the eleventh hour, *i. e.*, from 3 to 5 p.m. It was immediately roasted, and eaten after it was quite dark, or after the stars could be seen.

This was the time our Lord and His disciples took their Last Supper, for St. Luke says: "—and they made ready the Passover, and when *the hour* was come He sat down."

By the words "the hour" St. Luke meant, of course, the *proper* hour for taking the Supper of the Paschal Lamb, so soon to be succeeded by the Supper of the Lamb of God.

If, therefore, it was the proper hour for the one : and of this there can be no doubt, for our Lord Himself acknowledged it by waiting till the hour was come ; was it not also for the other ? And if so, what does St. Clement say ?

Clement, of Rome, was the fellow-laborer of St. Paul, and one of whom the Apostle wrote (Phil. IV. 3) that his name was in the Book of Life—and St. Clement's own words to the Corinthians (in his first Epistle, which is recognised as undoubtedly genuine,) are: "It will behove us to take care that, looking into the depths of divine knowledge, we do all things in order, whatsoever our Lord has commanded us to do ; and *particularly*, that we perform our offerings and service to God, *at their appointed seasons* : for these He has commanded to be done, not rashly and disorderly, *but at certain determinate times and hours*——. They, therefore, who make their offerings *at the appointed seasons* are happy and accepted ; because that, obeying the commandments of the Lord, they are free from sin."

For upwards of a century the early Christians probably continued to celebrate the Eucharist at

"*the hour*," as in the before-mentioned celebrated letter of Pliny, when Pro-consul of Bithynia, to the Emperor Trajan, describing the customs of the Christians and their meeting together on certain days before daylight for prayers, he says: "*after which it was their custom to separate, and re-assemble to partake in common of a harmless meal*"—but at last the cruel persecutions of the Pagan Emperors forced them, in some cases, to change the hours.

Canon Robertson says: "In the Apostolic age the administration of the Eucharist took place in the evening after the pattern of its original institution.

The Eucharist was at first preceded, but at a later date was more usually followed by the Agapæ or love feast.

After a time the administration of the Eucharist was transferred—and probably with a view of disarming the jealousies of the heathen—from the evening to the morning, when it was added to the service which had before been usual."

Although believing the evening to be strictly the proper time, still I question whether any change from after Morning Prayer is now advisable. But

should any desire to go a step farther from the Apostolic Church and its successor the Church of the Reformation, and a step nearer to the Church of the Dark Ages: to copy Rome and her Early Mass, and have Early Communion, they may expunge the term "The Lord's Supper" from their Prayer Books, for they will have a Communion only, as the Romanists call it, and not the Communion of the Supper.

I hear it frequently said that the morning is a more convenient hour, which I cannot help considering as either ignorance or blasphemy, for if not the former it is simply equivalent to saying that man's convenience is superior to God's law!

The time for the Supper was established by God the Father, by his servant Moses. It was renewed by God the Son, who waited for the hour. Saint Paul, the great Apostle of the Gentiles, followed his Lord's example, and the Apostolic Father Clement warns us not to change the hour!*

"Charity thinketh no evil, but a prudent man foreseeth the evil" and guardeth against it, and in

* Clement, Ignatius, Barnabas, Hermas and Polycarp, who all lived in the first century, were called Apostolic Fathers.

these times Protestants should remember the words of Archbishop Whately: "There are circumstances under which 'to sit still' is to place ourselves at the absolute disposal of those who are determined not to sit still."

With regard to the frequency of the administration of the blessed Sacrament of our Lord I will not venture to express an opinion.

Still however it does not appear that our Saviour intended it to be a daily service, for the cup which He blessed was the same as that used by the Jews at the conclusion of the Feast of the Passover, and which was called by them "the cup of blessing." When He took that cup He said, "This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me." This was said of the Passover Cup of Blessing,—*a cup used only once in the year!*

A few days after, on a Sunday evening, our Risen Lord met "the eleven," but did not give them His Supper, neither did He do so when He met them again the following Sunday. Was not

this because He had already administered it before His death, and did not intend it to be celebrated too frequently?

Romish commentators generally maintain that the Lord's Supper was given at Emmaus, but the contrary is clearly proved not only by Ryle and others but also by my own fellow-countryman, Professor van Oosterzee, who shows that the meal at Emmaus was only a common supper, and in taking and blessing the bread our Lord was only uttering the usual thanksgiving, to which, according to the Jewish rite, three who eat together are expressly obliged.*

Some thirty years later (viz. A.D. 59), it appears to have been a Sunday evening service, for it was on a Sunday evening that they met together at Troas to break bread. This however does not prove it to have been a regular Sunday evening service but rather the contrary, for had it been the rule it would have sufficed to say that they had met together, as we now say, "they have gone to

* Lange's Commentary. The Gospel According to Luke. By J. J. van Oosterzee, D.D., Professor of Theology in the University of Utrecht.

Church," whereas on a Communion Day we add, "and will stop to take the Sacrament."

Besides which, as before stated, our Lord met His disciples on two successive Sundays after His resurrection without giving them His Supper.

In the Acts of the Apostles we read, "And they, continuing daily with one accord in the Temple, and breaking bread at home, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart."*

From this it is clear that Christians then (A.D. 33) went daily to the Temple, and took the Lord's Supper at home, but it is not so clear that the latter was taken daily.

It is true that the early Christians appear to have made it a daily service by celebrating it at their feasts of charity, although there is no evidence when they commenced doing so; but in the year 59, Paul wrote to the Corinthians that there were heresies among them, and about the year 66, St. Jude condemns the "spots" in their feasts of charity—and who can say whether a too frequent celebration was not one of the heresies or spots?

* Dean Alford's revised version.

The Rubrics in the Book of Common Prayer are not very explicit as to when the Supper shall be administered, and much is left to the discretion of the ministers. Even the weekly service at Cathedrals is not obligatory, for there is a clause "except they have reasonable cause to the contrary."

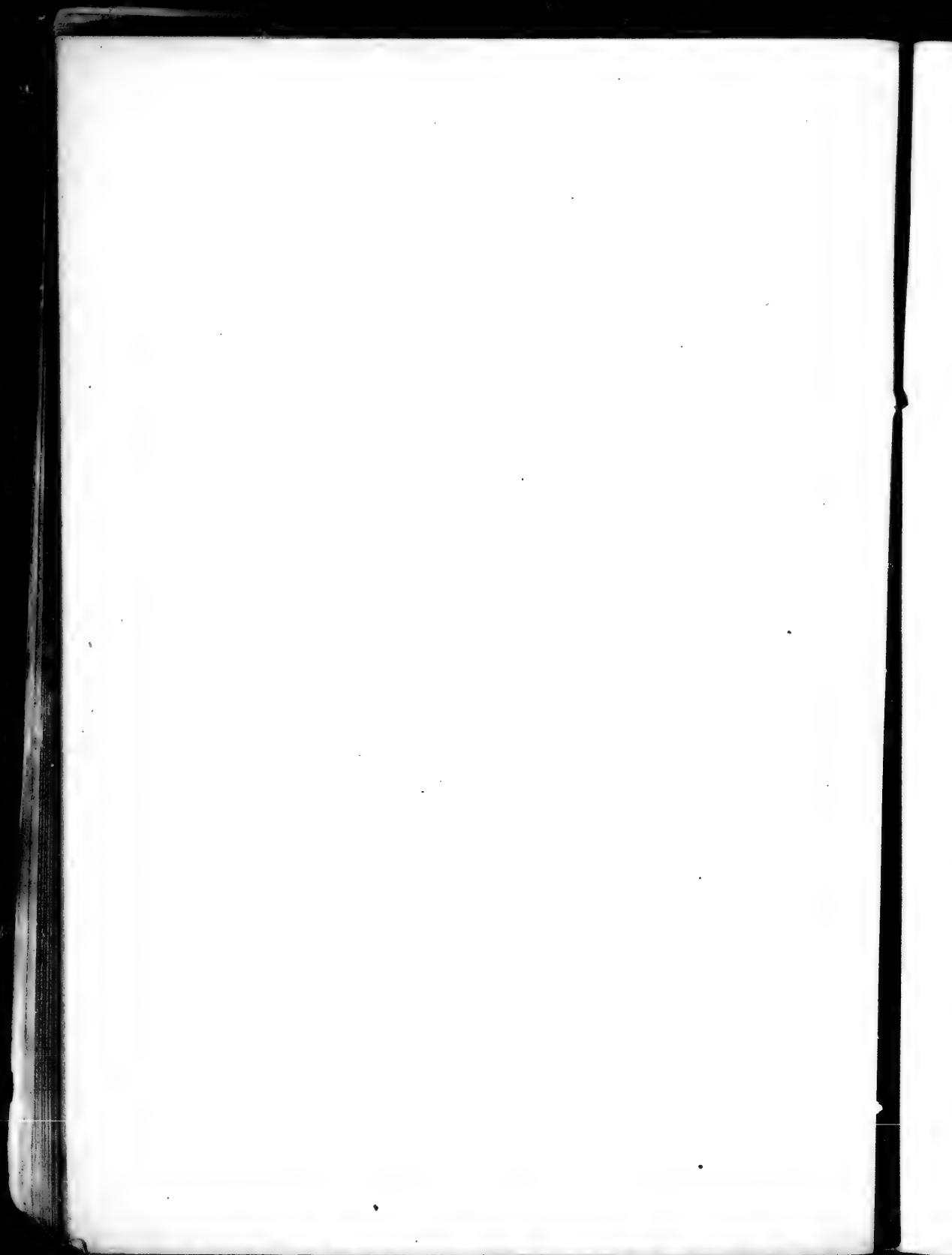
It is however expressly stated that every Parishioner shall communicate at least three times a year.

In the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, it is ordered in the 23rd canon, that the masters and fellows, with their pupils, whom they have thoroughly instructed in points of religion, shall be brought diligently to frequent public service and sermons, and receive the holy Communion four times in the year.

"Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

"Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup."





THE EAST IN PRAYER.

In view of the striking contrast between the types and shadows, and all the minute ceremonial observances of the Jewish Church, and the purely spiritual worship of the Christian Church, it can hardly fail to attract the notice of a thoughtful observer, when in some of our modern churches, the worshippers are seen studiously aiming at praying towards the east, or suddenly wheeling in the same direction in pronouncing the Creed.

That the Hebrew worshipper should turn towards the temple where the visible presence of God was manifested between the cherubim, was a reasonable and intelligent act of worship. To the Romanist, who literally believes that by the miracle of the Mass, the wafer has been converted into the Divine Being there present on the altar, the turning of the devout worshipper toward that visible presence, is also, from his point of view, a reason-

able, if not an intelligent act of worship. But what has the Protestant worshipper, who believes that the "sacramental bread and wine remain still in their very natural substances ; and the natural body and blood of our Saviour Christ are in heaven, and not here,"—what has he to do with turning to the so-called "altar," or looking anywhere but up to heaven, where alone the Hearer and Answerer of prayer dwells ?

Nevertheless as the practice of turning to the east in the public worship of the Christian Church, is more and more advocated and insisted on by one influential class of ecclesiastical reformers, it is worth while inquiring into the history and authority for the practice.

It is said that turning to the east in all solemn adorations, was a ceremony of almost general use and practice in the ancient church, and sundry reasons are given for it by the Fathers, one of which is : "That the east, as the seat of light and brightness, was the most honourable part of creation, and therefore peculiarly ascribed to God, the fountain of light, and the illuminator of all things ; as the west was ascribed to the devil,

because he hides the light and brings darkness on men to their destruction,"* and it was at one time customary during the ministration of baptism to renounce the devil with the face to the west.

To what Father are we indebted for this piece of information respecting the devil's place of residence? It must have been one who lived in the dark ages, and there were many such, for the last of the so-called "Fathers" died in the twelfth century. For my part I fail to see any necessity for venerating the teachings of every one whom the Church of Rome has dubbed with that name; and seek in vain for reasons calculated to give weight or special authority to the opinions of men removed by centuries from the age of the apostles, and living in periods of notorious ignorance and superstition.

Ignorance too which was not confined to the inferior orders of the clergy, and the laity only, for the bishops themselves were often equally illiterate. A single specimen may suffice. In the Council of Ephesus, in the fifth century, were two Members of the Council *who could not write* and

* Hook's Church Dictionary. Ninth edition. 1864.

their names were signed for them by others. *Elias, eo quod nesciam literas*, and *Cajumas, propterea quod literas ignorem !*

Nor is this surprising when we know that the episcopate was often *sold*, and sometimes even to boys.

St. Basil, who died in 379, complains that some of the bishops administered ordination for hire ; and in the year 401, St. Chrysostom, at one synod, deposed six bishops who all confessed to having given money to purchase their bishoprics, and soon after he deposed it is said no less than sixteen prelates.

Hallam says that "a child of five years old was made archbishop of Rheims, and the see of Narbonne was purchased for another at the age of ten. It was almost general in the church to have bishops under twenty years old. Even the Pope Benedict IX. is said to have been only twelve, but this has been doubted."

And with regard to their learning (I still quote the impartial historian of the Middle Ages) "Even the clergy were, for a long period, not very superior, as a body, to the uninstructed laity. An

inconceivable cloud of ignorance overspread the whole face of the church, hardly broken by a few glimmering lights, who owe almost the whole of their distinction to the surrounding darkness.

. . . . In almost every council, the ignorance of the clergy forms a subject for reproach. It is asserted by one held in 992, that scarcely a single person was to be found in Rome itself who knew the first element of letters. Not one priest of a thousand in Spain, about the age of Charlemagne, could address a common letter of salutation to another. In England, Alfred declares that he could not recollect a single priest south of the Thames, (the most civilized part of England,) at the time of his accession, who understood the ordinary prayers, or could translate Latin into his mother tongue. Nor was this better in the time of Dunstan, when it is said, none of the clergy knew how to write or translate a Latin letter.

. . . . In the shadows of this universal ignorance, a thousand superstitions, like foul animals of night, were propagated and nourished. . . .

Every cathedral or monastery had its tutelar saint, and every saint his legend, fabricated in order to

enrich the churches under his protection, by exaggerating his virtues, his miracles, and consequently his power of serving those who paid liberally for his patronage. Many of these saints were imaginary beings ; sometimes a blundered inscription added a name to the calendar ; and sometimes, it is said, a heathen god was surprised at the company to which he was introduced, and the rites with which he was honored."

Another reason said by Dean Hook to be given in favor of praying to the east is that Christ arose in the east, and will thence again appear at the last day.

But our Saviour did *not* arise in the east. It would be more proper to say that He arose in the west, for it was not to England or America that the Star was made manifest, but it appeared *only* to the wise men of and in the East, who journeyed westwards to Jerusalem, saying we have seen the Star in our eastern home. When they left Jerusalem the Star went before them in a south-westerly direction until it stood over where the Young Child was.

They saw the Star of Bethlehem which is to the

east of one quarter of the world only, and to the north, south and west of the other three quarters.

Let me now ask when was this custom introduced into the Christian Church; by whom, and upon what authority; and if it was a very ancient custom, how does it happen that some of the old Basilicas in Rome do not have their apses at the east?

In fact, according to Tertullian, Eusebius, and Paulinus of Nola, the early churches, like the Jewish temple, usually *fronted* the east.

Speaking of the rites and usages of the fourth century, Canon Robertson says: "Pagan usages were adopted,—the burning of lamps or candles by day (which, even so lately as the time of Lactantius, had been a subject of ridicule for the Christian controversialists), incense, lustrations, and the like. . . . A merely external performance of duties, as it was all that heathenism required, came to be regarded by many as sufficient in Christianity also. . . . The ritual of the church was viewed as a theatrical exhibition, . . . Usages which had grown up insensibly were now fixed by express regulations; and by

this and the other means which have been mentioned, the ritual system was so overlaid with rules and ceremonies, as to give occasion for St. Augustine's celebrated complaint, 'that they were grown to such a number that the estate of Christian people was in a worse case concerning that matter than were the Jews.'"

Here perhaps we see the introduction into the Christian Church of turning to the east—a pagan custom,—which grew up insensibly.

Had there been any testimony in favour of worshipping to the east in the Apostolic age, Dean Hook would probably have discovered it, although he seems to have overlooked the mention thereof at the end of the second century by Clemens of Alexandria and Tertullian. There were heresies then, however, and even Tertullian himself lapsed into Montanism.

All that the Dean says is, that "Epiphanius speaking of the madness of the imposter Elxæus,* counts this as one instance of it, among other things, that he forbade praying toward the east."

* Mosheim does not brand Elxæus as an imposter, but calls him a Gnostic.

This St. Epiphanius was a Christian Bishop, of the fourth century (died A.D. 403), who engaged in all the controversies of the times. It is said that his judgment was rash, and his credulity and mistakes very abundant. Another writer says that he was an austere and superstitious ascetic, and as a bitter controversialist, he often resorts to untrue arguments for the refutation of heretics. Scaliger uses still stronger language, for he calls St. Epiphanius an ignorant man, who committed the greatest blunders, told the greatest falsehoods, and knew next to nothing about either Hebrew or Greek!

What value, if any is to be placed upon the opinion of such a Father? Should it be retorted that Epiphanius must have been a man of learning, as he was acquainted with five languages, I have only to say that such knowledge is not at all uncommon in the Levant, where I have had Greek servants who could speak even more languages, and they, certainly, were no scholars.

Let it not be supposed for a moment however that I condemn all the Fathers, for Clement, whose name St. Paul says is in the Book of Life, was one of them.

St. John, Patriarch of Constantinople, was another, and well he deserved the name of Chrysostom, or Golden-mouth, given him after his death, for few prayers are more beautiful than his which we still retain in our Book of Common Prayer. But still it must be confessed that he had some strange ideas, for in his "Golden Book" he gives curious instructions for the bringing up of children. A boy, he says, must see no woman but his mother; must neither hear, see, smell, taste or feel anything that will give him pleasure; must fast twice in the week, frequently read the life of Joseph, and must know nothing about hell until he is over fifteen years old.

St. Augustine was a Father, and what is more beautiful than his "God the Father Everlasting?"

St. Basil, who for his surpassing learning and piety was called Basil the Great, was also one of the Fathers, and those who believe implicitly the testimony of the Fathers will do well to remember that Basil the Great, Bishop of Cesaria, in Cappadocia, who died in 379, says expressly that there is no scriptural authority for praying to the east, the sign of the cross, and several other things

then practised by the Church, but that they were derived *from instructions which have never been written*. Among these unwritten and unauthorised rites, he enumerates afterwards the consecration of the baptismal water. "From what writings," he asks, "comes this formulary? They have none; nothing but silent and secret tradition." St. Basil was writing in defence of tradition, but did he not, like a too eager witness, such as cross-questioning lawyers like to play with, commit himself by admitting too much? What would be said in a court of law if a witness confessed he had no proofs—nothing but hearsay evidence?

Perhaps some may say that other Fathers differ from St. Basil, which is not unlikely, for they were all fallible men, and it has almost become a proverb that a Father can always be found to contradict a Father; and such is also the case with the (so called) *infallible* Popes, to one of whom I would refer those who prefer Popes to Reformers. Let such turn to the works of Pope Leo the First (died A.D. 461), who was also styled the Great, and was canonized. Pope Leo the Great says that to his great sorrow the rising sun was worshipped from

the hills by some of the weaker sort, and that some Christians when they come to the Church of St. Peter, partly through ignorance and partly through a spirit of paganism, turn themselves back towards the rising sun and bow down their heads. Was not the zealous Leo (in this case at least) also a Reformer? One might almost suppose he was quoting the prophet Ezekiel. From their turning their backs to the church it is evident that the old basilica of St. Peter, built by the Emperor Constantine, who died A.D. 337, faced the west.

I believe that God's chosen people, and they only, had a valid reason for turning to a particular quarter when praying; and wherever they were, the Jews turned towards the Temple, because the *Shechinah*, or Divine Presence rested over the Mercy Seat, and was visibly seen in the semblance of a cloud over it.

Praying to the east is an old pagan custom, derived, without doubt, from the worship of the sun, which is mentioned with abhorrence by Job (xxx. 26), about fifteen hundred years before Christ, and was probably promulgated before the theory of the globular form of the earth was fully understood.

Now, however, we all know that the world is round, and where then is the real east? If a Canadian prays to the east he prays towards London or Paris, and should avoid the Rocky Mountains for fear of the Evil One, but to the dweller in China or Japan those very Rocky Mountains are his east!

The custom is referred to by Victorius, in his rules for building heathen temples, the eastern half of the sky being considered propitious, and the other half unlucky,—but I have never been able to find a sufficient warrant for its use by Christians.* On the contrary, it appears to be expressly condemned in Scripture.

* Unless only the command to the Jewish High Priest to sprinkle the blood of the bullock upon the Mercy-seat eastward, be construed as such, as in fact Origen (who died about A.D. 255) appears to have done, if we may believe one Latin translation, and we need not consider it an interpolation, for Origen had many fanciful ideas, and even alleged that the words of Scripture were in many places void of sense, and that the true meaning was to be sought in a mysterious and hidden sense arising from the nature of things in themselves! According to Robertson, Origen's great object was "to establish the Gospel in a form which should not present obstacles to the conversion of Jews, of gnostics, and of cultivated heathens."

A single verse in Ezekiel (xliii. 2) may possibly be quoted in defence of the custom, "And behold the glory of the God of Israel

Listen to the prophet Ezekiel (viii. 16)—“And he brought me into the inner court of the Lord’s house, and, behold, at the door of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar, were about five-and-twenty men, with their backs towards the temple of the Lord, *and their faces towards the east*; and they worshipped the sun *towards the east*. Then said he unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? Is it a light thing to the House of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here?”

Ritualists, when travelling, except they carry pocket compasses, must be as uncomfortably situated as Mahomedans, who also direct their prayers to a particular spot; and on board ship in my younger days I was often struck by seeing Musselmén who felt inclined to pray, go to the man at the wheel, and by signs, and sometimes in addition the word “Mecca,” ask the rude (and to them

came from the way of the East;” but on referring to two preceding chapters, it will be seen, that the glory of the Lord, when it forsook the temple, departed from the eastern gate and removed to a mountain outside of the city, and the visible Shechinah was now only *returning* from the “mountain which is on the east side of the city.” (Ez. xi. 23.)

infidel) sailor to what quarter they should direct their prayers, when they would coolly spread out their prayer carpet or burnoos on the deck to kneel on, and commence their devotions.

I often wondered that they trusted so much to the despised *giaour*, who might, if he chose, have ruined the effect of their prayers, by directing them to the wrong point of the compass !

If during a sea-voyage a Ritualist, who attached importance to the direction in which he worshipped, should commence his prayers properly by consulting the ship's compass before descending to the cabin to his devotions, and while saying his Creed the ship should go on another tack without his being aware of it, would not (according to his deas) the latter part of his service be addressed to the devil in the west ?*

Did Moses pray to the east ? No,—for his words are, “The Lord He is God in heaven above, and in the earth beneath.” And David ? No,—for he sang, “If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there ;

* Should any of my readers direct attention to this passage as a specimen of my irreverent style of writing, as was done with the privately printed edition, I trust they will not forget that I am only referring to the quotation on a previous page from Dean Hook.

if I make my bed in hell, behold Thou art there." And Solomon? No,—for he prayed, "Then hear Thou from heaven Thy dwelling place."

Nevertheless, ceremonial observances, and a special sanctity ascribed to the Temple of Jerusalem, constituted a feature of the Hebrew worship to which our Lord lent His full countenance. He purified the Temple that it might be restored to its true use as a house of prayer; even when foretelling its speedy and final overthrow. But in His answer to the woman of Samaria, we seem to read the unanswerable judgment of the Divine Founder of the Christian Church on all substitution of forms, and all addition of needless ceremonies, or assignment of special localities as exclusively fitted for the pure spiritual worship which was thenceforth to displace the temple service, and the praying towards Jerusalem. "Our fathers," said the woman, "worshipped in this mountain; and Ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe Me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father. . . . The hour cometh, and now is, when the true wor-

shippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth."

"Hear Thou from heaven Thy dwelling place," was the prayer of Solomon, even when dedicating that one visible temple in which God was pleased to manifest His visible presence on earth; and He of whom all the types and sacrifices of the Old Testament church were but as shadows; who Himself, when on earth, spent whole nights in prayer; did not, while condescending to teach His disciples how to pray, admonish them to turn to the east; though had He attached any importance to such an observance the occasion fitly admitted of its indication, in contrast to those who loved "to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men." What He did say only reiterated the idea that the worship of His followers was to be altogether a spiritual worship. "But thou when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father which is in secret."

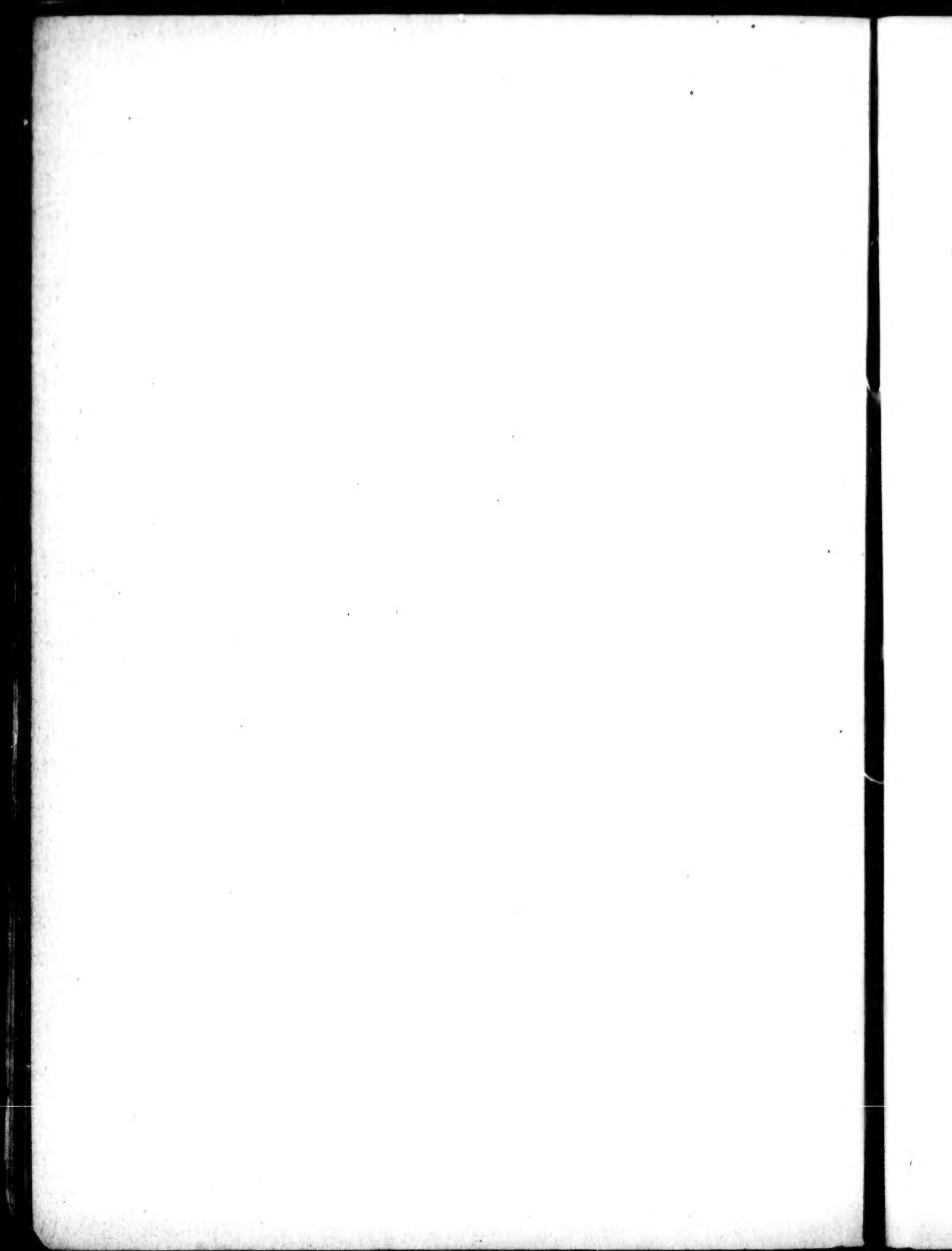
It is worthy of note, indeed, that our Divine Redeemer, while as a Jew He submitted to the

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law of Moses, and was obedient to the requirements of its ceremonial worship and observances ; nevertheless in many ways indicated how slightly He regarded all forms and ceremonies apart from their spiritual significance as but the "shadow of things to come." This is noticeable for example in all His references to the formal observance of the Jewish Sabbath ; but nowhere is it so remarkable as when, for the last time, He partook of the Passover immediately before the accomplishment of the one sacrifice which it had so long foreshadowed. "Thus shall ye eat it," is the explicit command of the Hebrew Law-giver : "with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand ; and ye shall eat it in haste : it is the Lord's passover." But when our Lord gathered His disciples around Him for the last time, in the guest chamber wherein He was to eat this passover with them : "When the hour was come He *sat down*, and the twelve apostles with Him." There was no semblance of haste ; no loins girded as if for a journey. For it was not till after supper was ended that He rose, "and laid aside His garments ; and took a towel, and girded

Himself ;" and after washing His disciples feet, and He "had taken His garments, and was set down again ;" the contrast to the "haste" of the Mosaic institution is made still further apparent : "Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved." Surely if there is any lesson taught us here, in the example of our blessed Redeemer, while practising so significant a part of Hebrew ceremonial and symbolic observance, immediately preparatory to the accomplishment of that which it had been instituted to symbolise, it is this, that all mere forms and ceremonial observances are insignificant. "God is a Spirit ; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth," "God is in heaven, and thou upon earth."

Of the poor publican whose humility our Lord commended, He says, he did "not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven," the seat of Him to whom alone prayer is to be offered ; and so He taught His disciples, "Our Father, which art in heaven." To that OMNIPRESENT GOD, and to Him alone (blessed be His holy name), we should address our prayers.





O God, fill my heart with fear of Thee ; not
with the fear of torment, but with the holy, child-
like fear of offending so kind a Father, so gracious
and merciful a Saviour.

